

## **Liliana and Luis Jimenez of Modesto High School win \$1,000 college scholarship for 'tv ad' entry in the "Save Me a Spot in College" Contest sponsored by the Campaign for College Opportunity**



Following in the footsteps of other sibling filmmakers like the Cohen or Wachowski Brothers, Luis and Liliana Jimenez may be the next big thing to come out of Modesto since George Lucas. In an incredibly artistic video, the brother and sister team make a powerful statement without dialogue, they let the images and music convey the message, "Save us a Spot in College" as part of the annual Scholarship Contest by that name.

Both were a part of the Modesto High School AVID class where they were first introduced to the scholarship contest. Luis is an avid music lover and frequently makes new songs and remixes old ones to develop new sounds. "I use the programs I have to create different songs; I recently re-mixed a song for my sister's wedding that she liked".

Luis is starting school at Modesto Junior College this semester pursuing a career in the music production field. "I am also interested in graphic design," he shares. As a rising sophomore, Liliana still has a few more years at Modesto High – but that hasn't stopped her from planning ahead. "My sister always tells me how important it is to go to college, so I know I will go." Liliana excels in her math and science classes as well as being active in her youth group and AVID class. She plans on becoming a teacher someday.

AVID is an academic enrichment programs that helps prepare educationally disadvantaged students for college. AVID students are often the first in their families to attend college and many are from low-income families.

Many of California's students, particularly low-income students, face significant challenges that they must overcome in order to reach college. These challenges contain both the pragmatic problem of figuring out how to get there and get financial aid and the equally critical issue – to believe that it is possible. Studies show that low income students both overestimate how much it will cost them to go to college and underestimate the amount of financial aid and resources that exist in California.

This is one reason why advocates and policymakers want lawmakers to pass SB 890 Early Commitment to College this year. The strategy of SB 890 is powerful and unique because it packages college and financial aid opportunities into one commitment made to students at an early age – starting in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. This means students like Liliana and Luis will learn early about their college opportunities. California already invests in an open-access community college system, excellent public universities, and many financial aid programs. This bill leverages these investments to motivate and give hope to students.

*The "Save Me a Spot in College" Scholarship Contest is made possible in part because of the generosity of funders such as the College Access Foundation of California and the McConnell Foundation.*